

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Planning Process

During 1995, a group of leaders in Dundalk met to discuss the future of the community. Chairman Monsignor Thomas Tewes of Our Lady of Hope invited the Seventh District Councilman to attend the meeting. Subsequent to the meeting, the councilman pledged to introduce a County Council Resolution (see "Appendix A") asking the county to prepare a plan for Dundalk. The Office of Planning coordinated the project in cooperation with the Office of Community Conservation. Because the plan spans such a large geographic area, the Greater Dundalk Community Council, a community umbrella group whose member organizations are spread throughout the Dundalk area, sponsored a "kick-off" meeting in April of 1997 to which citizen leaders and elected officials were invited. As a result of that meeting, attended by about 50 persons, seven committees were established to study issues and make recommendations. These committees were:

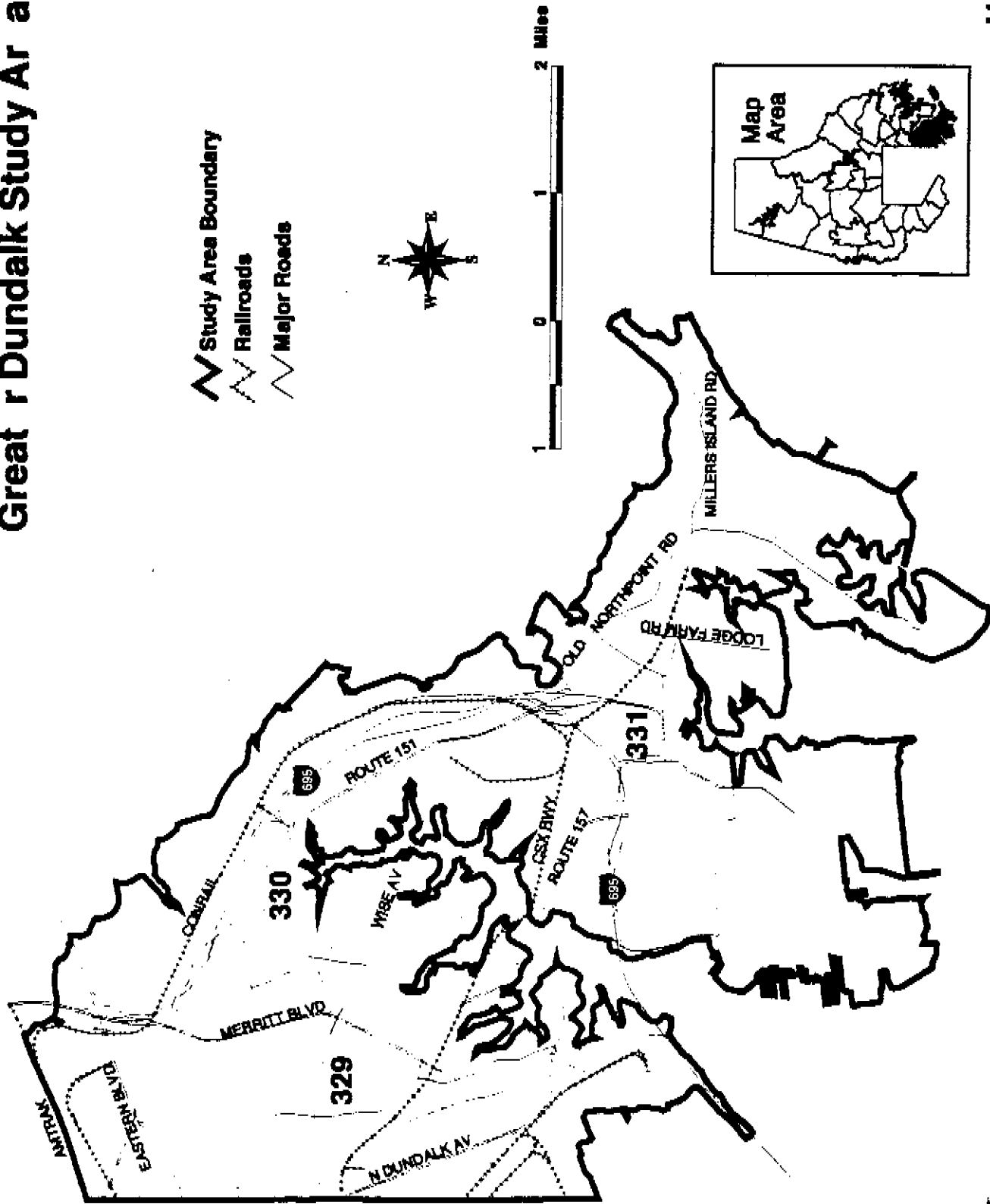
- Economic Development
- Education
- Environment
- Housing
- Human Services
- Physical Development: Infrastructure, Zoning, and Land Use
- Public Safety

About 75 people were involved in preparing the plan during the ensuing eighteen months. (See lists in "Appendix B.") Committee members included business people, church representatives, non-profit participants, and heads of community organizations, as well as individuals with interests in the future of the Greater Dundalk Area.

The Greater Dundalk area includes 24 census tracts and almost 70,000 people. The area extends from Quad Avenue (on the north) southeast along the entire peninsula west of Back River and includes Sparrows Point in the south. (See Map 1.)

As part of their studies, the committee chairs sought broader community input. A series of articles about each committee's recommendations, with response forms, was published in the Dundalk Eagle. One committee had a survey published, as well; the survey was also distributed at various locations in the area. The Eagle provided an insert of the executive summary of the plan for citizen comment. Finally, a general community meeting was held in the fall of 1998 prior to submission of the plan for adoption by the Planning Board and the County Council.

Great r Dundalk Study Ar a



Data Sources:
Roads: Baltimore County Metropolitan Council (1:24000) 1999

Map 1

B. Overall Themes and Recommendations

All of the recommendations put forth by the committees are included in the plan. However, three overall themes emerge as important: quality of life; youth initiatives; and the waterfront as an asset. The plan also focuses on many collaborative efforts to accomplish its goals.

Quality of Life

A good quality of life involves many factors, including public safety; good schools and a range of educational opportunities for all levels from pre-school to community college; adequate programs and activities for all ages; sufficient open space; solid, well-maintained housing; and thriving businesses that serve the local community, as well as provide high-paying jobs.

Looking out for one's neighbor and maintaining the physical appearance of the neighborhoods are important, too.

Code enforcement is the top issue for the Planning Committee. Promoting the community is also important. This concept relates to conveying a positive image for the community. With an increasing elderly population, the planning group recognizes the need to attract new homeowners to the area. In addition, it hopes many young people who grew up in Dundalk will stay and buy homes rather than move out of the community.

The home ownership rate in the greater Dundalk area remains high (approximately 72% compared to a countywide average of 63%, according to the 1990 census). However, many of the houses are over 50 years old. Reinvestment must continue in order to keep housing viable and attractive to homeowners. The county and the community must hold landlords accountable for rental properties and support programs to make home ownership possible, especially for young people.

Dundalk has a rich history of service through churches and various other organizations. As human needs increase, many people are not aware of the many opportunities to become involved in programs or to have emergency needs met. The centralization of information and the decentralization of service delivery to those whose transportation and other resources are limited are also important. Improved transportation to services is a priority, as well.

The center of pride for those who live in Dundalk, and even for those who have moved away, is the Dundalk Village Shopping Center. It is important that the buildings are actively used. It is also important that Baltimore County maintain the park and the infrastructure in the heart of Dundalk. As pilot programs are initiated to improve infrastructure, the Planning Committee recommends that, where feasible, these projects are concentrated in the Village area to get the most visible "bang for the buck."

Youth Initiatives

While many young people are involved in numerous activities in the community, others are not channeling their energies in positive ways. Many of the juvenile crimes are committed between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. This time period is also a window of opportunity for teenage sexual activity. The Planning Committee has recognized the need for "latch-key" programs during these

hours, especially for middle school children. Maintenance or expansion of youth recreation programs is also important.

A few young people attended the planning meetings to prepare this plan. However, ways should be found to involve more youth in leadership roles in the community. One option for youth involvement is the establishment of a youth council.

Another high priority is the retention of experienced, qualified teachers in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The turnover of teachers in Dundalk must be addressed if we want our children to succeed as adults.

The Waterfront as an Asset

The Greater Dundalk area has 64 of the approximately 219 miles of shoreline in Baltimore County. Not only are many homes located on or near the water, but so are several schools. In addition, local and regional parks are valuable assets for residents, as well as for the county as a whole. Maintaining or improving water quality, while supporting industrial jobs in the area is essential for all groups within the community.

The Planning Committee views the greater Dundalk area as an environmental laboratory. Sparrows Point High School has been granted an environmental magnet program. With the presence of Bethlehem Steel and other industries, as well as the Black Marsh wildlife refuge, students can study all aspects of air and water quality, as well as animal and plant life.

The waterfront also offers tourism opportunities and waterfront destinations for boaters that will help the local economy. The environmental, education, and economic development sections of this plan address the importance of the waterfront.

Collaboration

Although some of the plan recommendations require additional county resources, many of the proposals call for greater collaboration among various segments of the community. Dundalk has traditionally solved its own problems; this spirit is alive in the plan. The community is asking itself to be accountable, with assistance from the county concerning issues that cannot be handled without county support. This approach is a tribute to the people of the greater Dundalk area.

Collaboration is also important with Baltimore City residents, businesses, and government, since some of the community associations straddle the city-county line. Some issues, like economic and work force development and some environmental and public safety issues know no borders and would benefit from cooperative efforts. The Port of Baltimore is also an asset to Anne Arundel County, so regional cooperation regarding economic and work force development is important.

Recommended Priorities

The Planning Committee members present at the January 12, 1998, meeting voted on priorities for the area. While all the recommendations in the plan are important, the top 15 issues

(particularly the top five) merit special attention in terms of priority of action and their broad impact on the Greater Dundalk area. They are listed in order of priority.

1. Improve code enforcement
2. Market our communities
3. Develop additional programs for children in self-care ("latch-key") within elementary and, especially, middle schools
4. Improve the Dundalk Village Shopping Center
5. Develop an on-going informational program for community services
6. Educate people about health issues (substance abuse, diet, and exercise)
7. Retain experienced, qualified K-12 teachers
8. Allot more funding to the Police Department
9. Develop a "Health and Human Services Roundtable"
10. Expand recreational activities for youth
11. Promote tourism
12. Urge churches to become more involved in their communities
13. Encourage the formation of a Bear Creek Waterway Association
14. Develop new leadership by conducting leadership training workshops
15. Improve transportation for people who need services

Each committee has made more specific recommendations. The various sections of the plan discuss them in more detail. Prior to this discussion, the plan includes a profile of the Dundalk area in narrative form (prepared by long-term resident Tom Toporovich) and in terms of demographic information. The Planning Committee offers special thanks to Peggy Taylor, who edited the entire document.

C. Greater Dundalk Area (GDA) Profile

Boundaries

The Greater Dundalk area (GDA) embodies most of the Seventh Councilmanic District of Baltimore County in the southeastern part of the county. It encompasses the entire Patapsco Neck Peninsula, including all of Dundalk, Edgemere, Fort Howard, Millers Island, and Sparrows Point. It is bounded on the north by Canton Industrial Park and Quad Avenue, on the west by Baltimore City and the Patapsco River, on the east by Back River, and by the Chesapeake Bay on the south. Its geographical importance is highlighted by its 64 miles of waterfront, which include residential, industrial, commercial, and recreational uses. The GDA is unique, a conglomeration of some 40 communities working together in their mutual interests.

History

The area traces its origins to Lord Calvert in the 17th century. Its history includes the writing of the Star Spangled Banner off its shore and the battle of North Point, the turning point of the War of 1812. The area now known as Dundalk Village was one of the first planned communities in the United States designed at the end of World War I and was planned as a self-supporting community with schools, churches, parks, and a restricted commercial sector.

The area evolved into an industrial complex from its agricultural origins. At its peak, the area contained the largest producing steel mill in the free world, a major shipyard, a cable plant that provided telephone communication between the Atlantic continents, General Motors and Lever Brothers plants, and the ancillary installations that supported all of those operations. During the post-World War II industrial boom, the area became the county's fastest-growing area. If the area had been allowed to incorporate, it would have been Maryland's second largest city, second only to Baltimore; the Seventh Councilmanic District is still the county's most densely populated district in Baltimore County.

The Port/Development

While downsizing has reduced the area's industrial base, the existing infrastructure of road, water, sewer, and storm drains, existing industrial and commercial zoning, and enlightened governmental development processes make the area a prime site for expansion.

Education

Educational needs are met by both public and private sources from preschool to college, infant to senior adult. Dundalk Community College (DCC--now the Dundalk campus of the Community College of Baltimore County) was founded because of the persistence of local citizens, organizations, and political leaders and continues to be the only county campus with a local advisory council. Although its campus site and service area may well be, in terms of land area, the smallest in the state, its impact on and importance to the community are not exceeded by any campus in the state.

The college and the award-winning Sollers Point/Southeastern Technical High School work closely with local employers to develop necessary training programs and employees capable of being successful in world-class competition. Four-year and post-graduate pursuits are accessible within minutes of local residences or job sites.

The North Point Library is reputed to be one of the busiest in the county and provides access to computers, the Internet, and special programs, in addition to books, video and audiotapes, and reference material.

Health/Human Services

Public and non-profit semi-public centers provide numerous types of services treating physical ailments, mental health, and drug abuse problems. Local sites provide temporary lodging and counseling for the county's victims of spousal abuse and crisis intervention for troubled youths. State-funded sites provide assisted-living housing for those who would have otherwise been domiciled in state institutions. National, county, and church organizations sponsor an abundance of senior centers and programs.

Recreation

Community-based recreation councils determine local programs, which typically use County parks and shared school-based sites and facilities. Local and state parks not only provide recreational uses but environmental habitats and waterfront and boating activities.

Churches

Area churches are a mainstay of the community and have extended their efforts to assist the underprivileged and increased their support of community efforts to provide solutions for social problems, partly through their ecumenical ministerial alliance. They also provide high quality parochial education.

Public Safety

The GDA is part of the county's reciprocal metropolitan agreements with the City, adjoining counties, and state and federal agencies to provide emergency back-up services for fires, crime, health, and natural disasters. The county's Police Department Training Academy is located on the Dundalk campus of the Community College, where police receive continuing education and in-service training. The area has a large number of Citizens on Patrol (COP) neighborhood teams and a large, active police auxiliary group.

Two volunteer and three paid fire companies provide fire suppression, prevention, and emergency medical services. The competent, professional performance of local police officers, emergency medical technicians, and firefighters is so high that they are taken for granted most of the time by the community.

Culture

Dundalk's Chorus of the Chesapeake has twice won international championships and numerous regional titles in its lengthy history. Fourth of July parades have run continuously in Dundalk since 1935. Since 1976, the Heritage Fair has grown to a three-day celebration of our nation's birth. National headliners and international bands attract parade audiences in excess of 100,000 and fair attendance of over 50,000. For over 40 years, the Dundalk Concert Association has presented international dance troupes, nationally known bands, Metropolitan Opera stars, and Broadway artists to long-running sold-out houses.

People and Organizations

The area is known for its caring people and organizations, which range from international service clubs to community civic associations. Local Optimist, Rotary, Jaycee, and veterans groups have achieved state, national, and international recognition for outstanding efforts and individuals. The Heritage Association produces the 4th of July parade and the Heritage Fair annually.

The Greater Dundalk Community Council addresses environmental, developmental, governmental, and community issues and organizes local, county, and state-wide groups; seminars dealing with: pollution, drug awareness and prevention programs, taxes, environmental and health issues, veterans concerns, and leadership. It participates in state, city, county, and area bodies that oversee, plan, monitor, and advise governmental and legal entities and maintains close working relationships with local, county, state, and federal officials.

Values

The area is well known for its individual work ethic, fiscal prudence, and respect for property and persons. Neighbors help each other through difficult times and join together to protect the integrity of the community. Local pride and patriotism are other evident traits in the community.

While the GDA has many qualities to recommend it, the Planning Committee recognizes some growing urban problems and suggests the groundwork for solutions.

D. Demographic Profile

The demographics of the greater Dundalk area are organized according to Regional Planning Districts (RPDs). Because the GDA is a geographically large and diverse area, the study area is divided into smaller pieces for this analysis.

Maps 2, 3, and 4 show the boundaries of the three RPDs. The boundary for RPD 329 begins at the railroad line at Eastern Avenue in the north, moves west along Eastern Avenue to North Point Road, then east and south along Merritt Boulevard. It then moves southwest along Bear Creek to the city line. This RPD encompasses Colgate, Eastwood, Eastpoint, Old Dundalk and nearby neighborhoods, Watersedge, and Turner Station.

RPD 330 begins at Eastern Avenue on the north and includes the neighborhoods east of Merritt Boulevard such as Gray Manor and Charlesmont. It then moves east along North Point Boulevard to Back River and south to the railroad tracks just north of the Bethlehem Steel property.

The remainder of the peninsula (from Greenhill Cove south), including Edgemere, Bethlehem Steel, and the North Point State Park, is represented in RPD 331.

With the exception of the Edgemere area, where waterfront properties continue to be developed, population in the area has fallen 21.3%, from 83,625 in 1970 to 65,826 in 1990. (See Appendix C, Table 1, for details.)

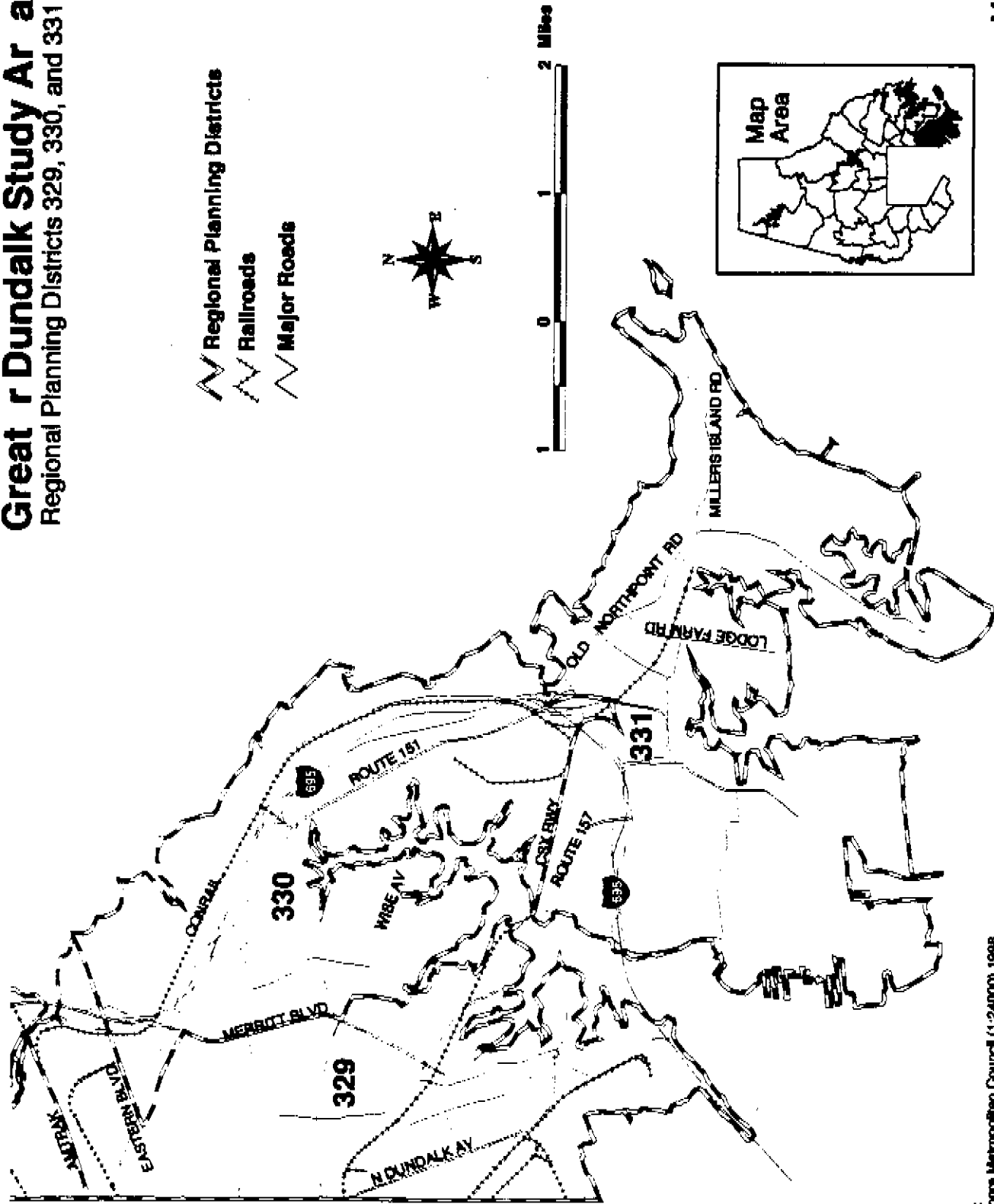
The percentages of the population in different age groups are changing, as well. (See Appendix C, Table 2.) While the proportion of young people continues to reflect the county average, the elderly population has grown significantly. With the exception of RPD 330, the proportion of residents 65 or older in the GDA in 1970 was just under 5%; but by 1990, it had grown to almost 19%. In 1970, the proportion of elderly was lower than the county average of 7.36%. In 1990, however, the GDA's 18.73% was significantly higher than the county average of 13.99% (except in RPD 330). More than a quarter of the people living in RPD 329 (26.42%) were 65 or older in 1990. There is no reason to believe this trend has not continued into 1998.

The implications for the future of the greater Dundalk area are great. The census tracts, which are smaller areas than RPDs, usually contain several thousand people. The census tracts in the GDA are shown on Map 2. The name given for a particular census tract (CT) might not coincide with the exact name used by the residents in the area but will serve as a basis for analysis.

In RPD 329, the age of homeowners and the homeownership rates have been compared. In 1990, in Eastwood (CT 4205.1), for example, 22.2% of the residents were 65 or older (vs. the county average of 14%). Those who moved into the area did so before 1959 and occupied 45% of the

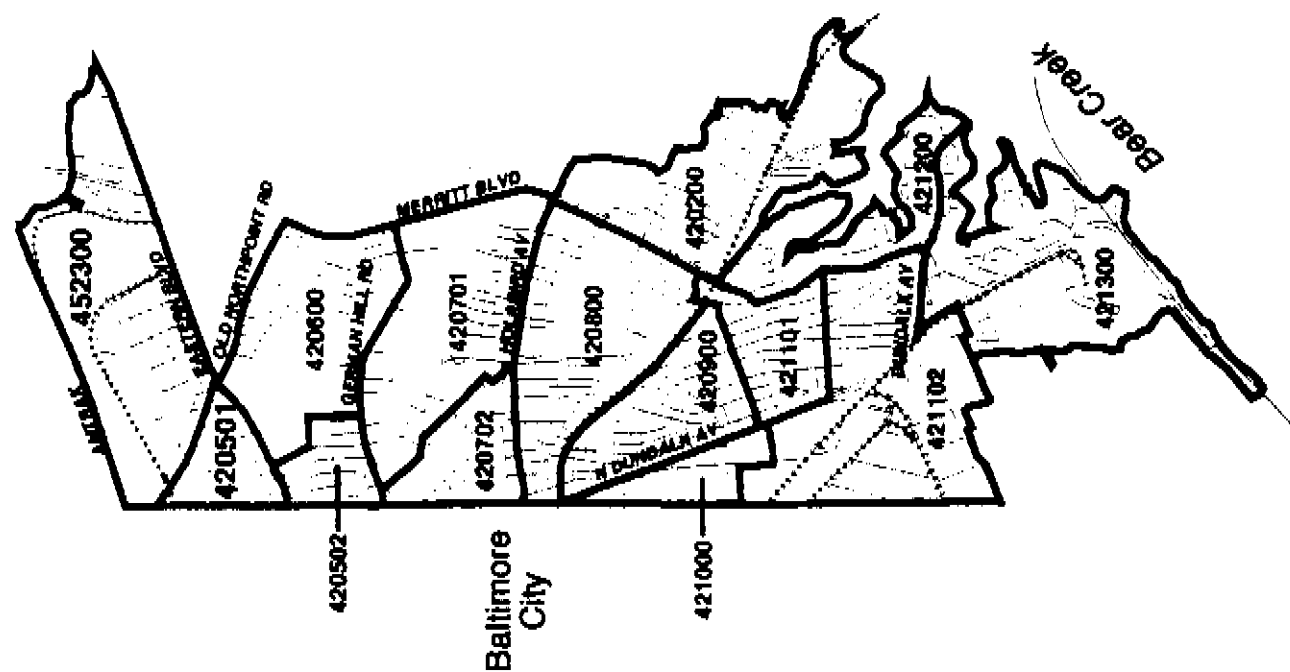
Great r Dundalk Study Ar a

Regional Planning Districts 329, 330, and 331



Data Sources:
 Roads: Baltimore Metropolitan Council (1:24,000) 1998
 Regional Planning Districts: Baltimore Metropolitan Council (1:24,000) 1998

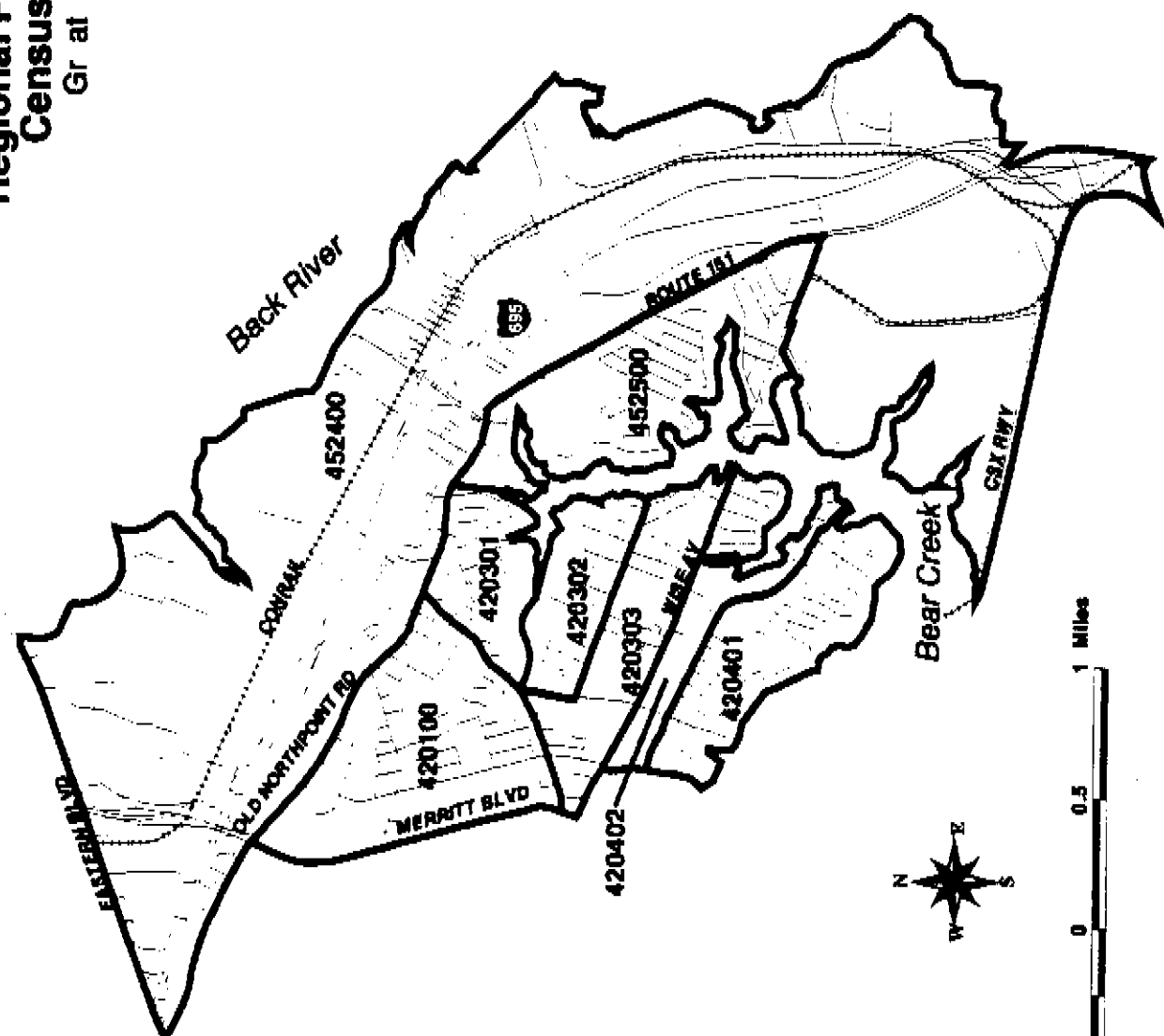
Regional Planning District 329: Census Tract Boundaries Greater Dundalk Study Area



Data Sources:
Roads: Baltimore County Metropolitan Council (1:24,000) 1998
Census Tracts: United States Bureau of the Census (1:100,000) 1998

Map 3

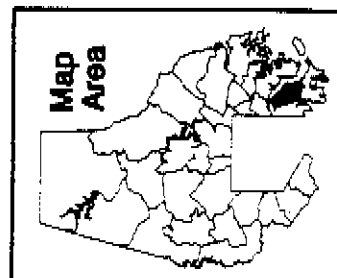
Regional Planning District 330: Census Tract Boundaries Gr at r Dundalk Study Area



Census Tracts at Risk	
420301	420401

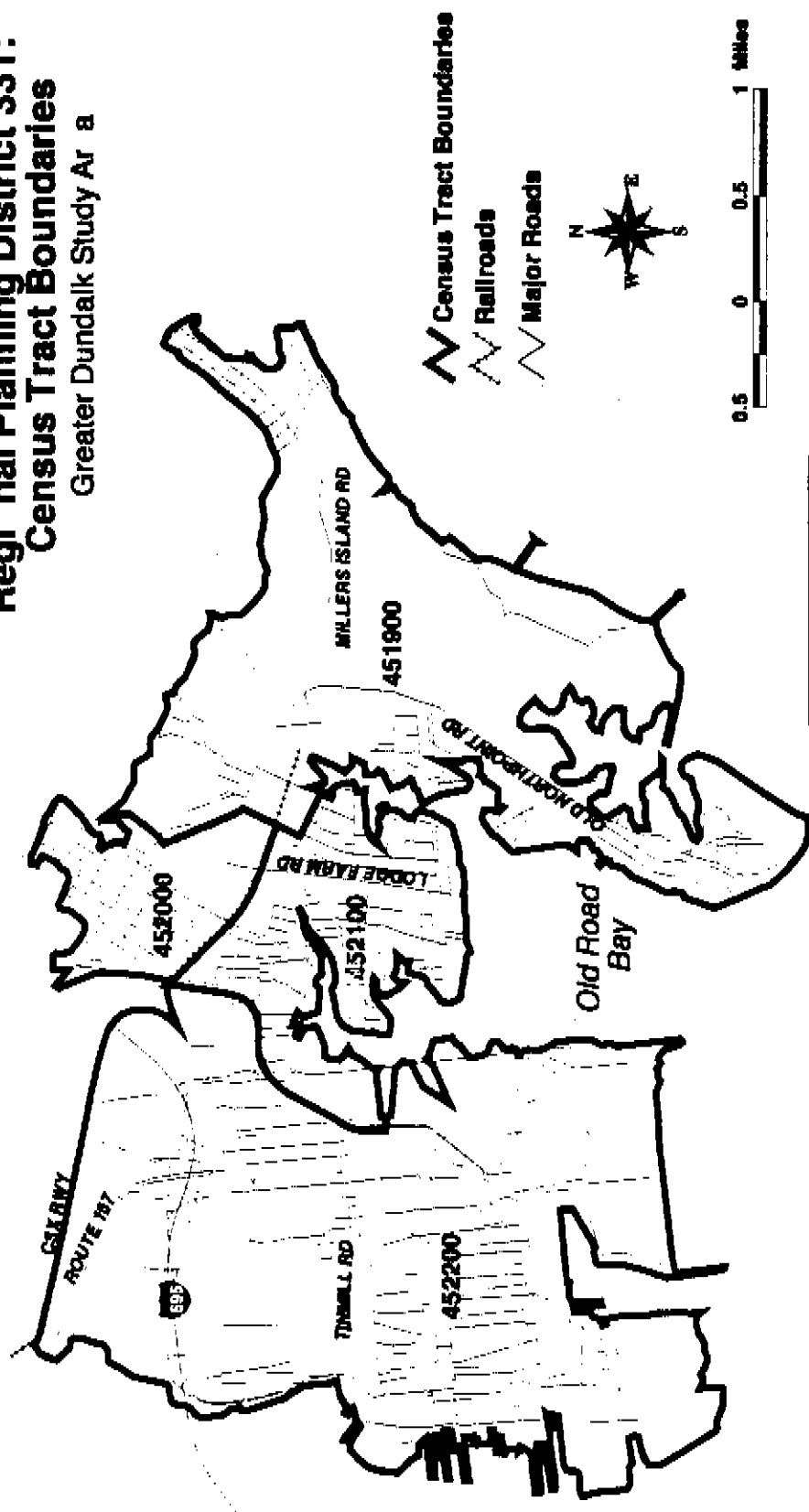
Census Tracts With High Proportion of Elderly	
None	

- Census Tract Boundaries
- Railroads
- Major Roads



Data Sources:
Roads: Baltimore County Metropolitan Council (1:24,000) 1988
Census Tracts: United States Bureau of the Census (1:100,000) 1996

Regional Planning District 331: Census Tract Boundaries Greater Dundalk Study Area



Census Tracts at Risk
None

Census Tracts With High
Proportion of Elderly
None

Patapsco River

Data Sources:
Roads: Baltimore County Metropolitan Council (1:24,000) 1988
Census Tracts: United States Bureau of the Census (1:100,000) 1996

Map 5

housing units. The homeownership rate was 90%. In the triangle north of Holabird Avenue between the city line and Delvale Avenue (CT 4207.02), there were 23.2% elderly, 41% who moved in before 1959, and a homeownership rate of 88%. In the Gray Manor area (CT 4201), the numbers were 19.6%, 42%, and 85%, respectively. The figures were 14.8% over 65, 40% who moved in before 1959, and 89% who were homeowners in the Gray Haven area (CT 4203.03). The percentages in the area south of Belclare Road (CT 4211.02) were 23.4% elderly, 39% who moved in before 1959, and 92% who were homeowners. In addition, in Eastwood, 93% of the houses were valued at under \$75,000; 36% were valued at under \$60,000. A similar pattern of elderly homeowners living in houses valued at less than \$75,000 exists in several other neighborhoods in the GDA.

One of the conclusions drawn from this information is that, while the homeownership rate remains high in many neighborhoods in the GDA, a number of houses have long-term occupants -- many of whom are original owners -- whose houses will probably be sold in the coming decade due to the age of the occupants. A number of these homeowners have not updated their major systems (electrical, plumbing, heating, air conditioning), and the prices are quite reasonable. While the GDA offers affordable housing for first-time homebuyers, a large number of these homes may be converted to rental units. This trend has already begun in some areas.

Efforts must be made to 1) upgrade the public infrastructure, 2) assist first-time homeowners to buy, and 3) help long-term homeowners in the renovation of individual houses. The recommendations to market the GDA in a coordinated, visible way and to strengthen code enforcement to maintain or improve the appearance of neighborhoods are critical initiatives for the future stability of the GDA.

While the minority population in the county has grown over the last two decades, it has remained fairly constant in the GDA. (See Appendix C, Table 3.) In 1990, the Caucasian population was about 85% countywide and 96% in the GDA, up slightly from 1980. These figures are also reflected in the school population. (The numbers are shown in the education section below).

Although the population in the GDA has been dropping, the number of households has risen due to smaller household size. (See Appendix C, Table 4.) As in the county in general, the proportion of homes with families (those related by blood or marriage) and married couples has been falling in the GDA. The proportion of female-headed households in Baltimore County has risen from less than 8% in 1970 to over 15% in 1990. The trend in the county is mirrored in the GDA.

Both per capita and median family incomes in the GDA have remained somewhat below the county averages from 1970 to 1990. Generally, incomes have been lower in RPD 329 than in the other parts of the GDA. (See Appendix C, Table 5.) The percentage of persons in poverty has remained slightly above the county average. In 1990, this figure in the GDA was almost 6%. In 1970, the highest proportion of persons in poverty was in RPD 331 but had shifted to RPD 329 in 1990. (See Appendix C, Table 6.)

The unemployment rate in the GDA has been about 2% above the county average since 1970 and has been even higher in RPD 331 since 1980. (See Appendix B, Table 7.) In 1996, it stood at 7.6%, a rate comparable to 1980.

Census Tract Profiles of Selected Sub-areas

While census tract boundaries do not necessarily coincide with the perceived boundaries of each neighborhood, they are a convenient way to get a "snapshot" of conditions at a particular point in time. The U.S. Census, conducted every decade, provides the baseline information. This information can be supplemented by more recent data in categories such as crime statistics and school test scores. While some agencies report data by other geographic areas, such as zip codes, we have tried to match the information with census tracts whenever possible.

While strong neighborhoods make up much of Greater Dundalk, there are indicators of current or potential problems in some neighborhoods. These specific pockets should be monitored in order to identify and address issues in these areas.

Those census tracts where a number of factors coalesce to indicate problems that need to be addressed have been identified. Some of the key indicators that problems may exist include: high proportion of renters, female-headed households, poverty households, and low-moderate income residents; low school test scores; and high crime rates.

Areas exhibiting many of these characteristics are shown on Map 2. They are the areas known as Charlesmont (CT 4203.01); Inverness (CT 4204.01); Yorkway (CT 4209); St. Helena (CT 4210); and Turner's Station (CT 4213).

Three of the areas identified contain large apartment complexes: Town and Country in Charlesmont, Hidden Cove in Inverness, and York Park Apartments. While crime rates are higher in the Yorkway and Hidden Cove areas than Dundalk as a whole, they are lower in Charlesmont. This discrepancy may be due largely to the differences in management practices in the complexes.

Two other areas are exhibiting negative characteristics: Colgate (CT 4523) and Old Dundalk South (CT 4211.01). The percentage of people in poverty within these areas is growing; the school test scores are only fair; and the proportion of houses with values below \$75,000 is almost 100%. While homeownership rates are still high in Colgate and nearby Eastwood, it is important to monitor these changes to ensure stable homeowner communities.

As mentioned earlier, other census tracts show signs of an increasing elderly population. This fact may impact service needs and could indicate that a number of houses might come on to the market within the decade as elderly residents change their living arrangements. These areas include Eastwood (CT 4205.01), Harbor View Park (CT 4205.02), City Line/Holabird Avenue (CT 4207.02), St. Helena (CT 4210), Old Dundalk South (CT 4211.01), and Logan Village Shopping Center (CT 4211.02).

In planning Dundalk's future, all areas mentioned in this section should be monitored. Intervention strategies should be developed and tailored to the specific issues discovered in each area.